THE

Commonweal

Impressions of America

by Michael P. Fogarty

Israel Today: Modern Sparta

by Gunnar D. Kumlien

Priest of the Slums

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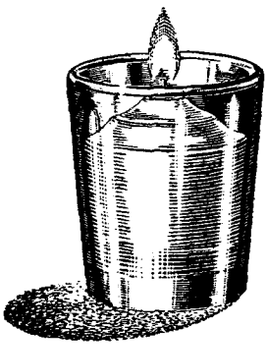

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SECOND YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

PROTESTANTS IN SPAIN

THE TANGLED Church-State relations which now exist in Franco's Spain have been for long the cause of misunderstanding and acrimony. About Spain, Catholics have argued heatedly among themselves, and it has frequently set some Protestants and Catholics against each other. Those who wish to attack the Church point to Spain as if it were a typical "Catholic" country and attack the excesses of the government as if they were refuting Catholicism. Others fear that Spain represents a Catholic ideal and ask questions on this basis, often receiving answers hardly designed to dissipate their fears. Many Catholics succumb to the same simplicities and defend Spain in every action that involves the Church as if they were thereby defending, asserting and living up to their religion.

Several recent incidents indicate that the situation, unfortunately, continues unchanged. Not long ago we wrote against the action of the Spanish Ministry of Information when it confiscated devotional works and copies of the New Testament intended for Protestants in Spain. Subsequently we disputed the contention of the Reverend Doctor Hampton Adams when he said that he would regretfully refrain from voting for a Catholic President or Vice President and pointed to abuses in Spain and elsewhere to support his position.

We criticized both of those incidents because we believe they were harmful both to religion and to individual freedom of conscience. Other dangers, to which some American Catholics succumb, were emphasized by the recent comments of Dale Francis, a widely read Catholic columnist. In speaking of the difficulties which Protestant ministers have encountered in Spain, he wrote, "Sometimes . . . . I wonder why they are there at all. It seems to me that Protestant missionaries are needed most of all in Sweden, a country that has probably the most lax sexual moral standards in the world and a country that has been almost exclusively Protestant since the time of Luther. . . . In Spain, where the number of Protestants is considerably less than the number of Buddhists in the United States, the Spanish people can't be blamed for not enjoying the sight of hundreds of Protestant ministers arriving in their country to say bitter things about their faith."

This short section flows from some assumptions that are scarcely worth discussion. The suggestion that Protestant missionaries should go to Sweden to raise the level of sexual morality is scarcely more sensible than the suggestion that we send Catholic missionaries to Southern Italy to raise the standard of morals or to decrease the Communist vote. And the implication that ministers should go only to countries where there are many Protestants has its corollary: send Catholic missionaries only to countries such as Ireland or Belgium but keep them out of China, India or Africa, where they are a minority. The further suggestions that the "hundreds of Protestant ministers" arrived in Spain with the intention of saying bitter things about Catholicism is as gratuitously insulting as are comments that Catholic missionaries go to India to attack Hinduism.

NONE OF these assumptions and statements, it is clear, have an essential relation to Catholicism. And this would be true even if the majority of Catholics were to share these views. For what is true is not best served by intolerance or a closed mind. Where these are pressed into supposed service of religion, we encounter not a religious attitude, nor a philosophical adjunct of a religious position, but a psychological phenomenon which can best be accounted for in personal or historical terms.

The nature of a truly religious response was stated recently by Archbishop Cushing when he

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told Catholics that if they acted in a spirit of love for the truth they would avoid an attitude of "unbending severity" toward those of another faith. They should avoid religious indifferentism, but act in a "spirit of zeal for the triumph of truth over the disintegrating influences of hatred and dissension."

Of equal importance to many readers will be a question which Mr. Francis did not discuss but which his comments will recall, for there remains the question of Spain as the supposed classic example of the "Catholic state." The synthesis of Church and State which was the medieval ideal was impressive and had much to recommend it. But it did not provide the norm; it was rather of its time, and today we can see it pass without regret. We have sought for and are discovering relations between Church and State which are more profitable to each in a civilization which is post-Christian.

The formulation of a Church-State position pertinent to the realities of our time must be based on two principles which Pope Pius XII stated less than three years ago: "First, what does not correspond to truth and the moral norm objectively has no right either to existence, to propaganda, or to action."

This is the traditional "error has no rights" theory which some Catholics and their bitterest critics have often stressed while they minimized the second principle: "In the interests of a higher and broader good, it is justifiable not to impede this error by state laws and coercive measures." The Pope added that "the duty to repress religion and moral deviation cannot be an ultimate norm for action."

Those who criticize religious activities—of whatever kind—in Spain would do well to keep these principles before them. What is unjust deserves to be criticized, but what is accidental should not be criticized, or defended, as if it were essential, either by Catholics or Protestants. And an awareness of these principles should do much to dissipate the needless hatred and dissension which Franco's Spain so readily arouses.

NEXT WEEK

JEAN DANIELOU writes about Christian civilization in a changing world.

"Christian civilization is an ambiguous entity. The term is susceptible to many interpretations, but it is not only a question of words. The ambiguity is in the thing itself, because Christian civilization exists within the boundaries of two worlds: on the one hand, that of the Church with its supernatural mission; on the other, that of the Earthly City with its properly human objectives."

TWO CHINESE DEVELOPMENTS

ONE OF the most convincing of the many varying speculations about Communist China is that since the death of Stalin it is Mao who has become the leading Communist figure in the world. Signs that China now regards itself as a political equal have been many despite its technical and military dependence on Moscow. The Chinese Communists have been anything but slavish imitators of the Soviet Union in their manner of expropriating private enterprises, for example. This fits in well with the present line whereby varying forms of Communism appear acceptable to the Kremlin. And from time to time there have also been indications that Communist China was asserting its independence of the Soviet Union in decisions on certain international matters.

The fact, then, that the Chinese Communist leaders did not immediately get aboard the deStalinization bandwagon occasioned little surprise. There was a long period during which it was possible to contrast China's continued international obduracy with the Khrushchev-Bulganin effort to generate goodwill in all directions. But now the Chinese Communists appear to have turned that corner, too. The invitation to eighteen American newsmen to visit Communist China for a month "to see what we are actually doing," with all expenses paid by the Chinese Government, is strikingly parallel to recent Soviet efforts to widen contacts and lessen tensions with the outside world. It is a sharp reversal of the Bamboo Curtain policy, and it is regrettable that our State Department's first reaction was a flat refusal on technical grounds.

There is reason to believe that the lot of the ten American prisoners still held by the Chinese could only improve, and the date of their release draw closer, with such a visit. Meanwhile the information on the situation of the admirable Chinese people which these various newsmen would gather firsthand and transmit to the uninformed American people, would be invaluable in guiding us in our future dealings with this dictatorship ruling more than half a billion souls. Do not Americans have enough confidence in their institutions and way of life to welcome the greatest informational interchange between this country and any other?

Chou En-lai's announcement of a new "open door" in China is a sign of national self-confidence, as are the good facilities that have been afforded

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foreign newsmen there in recent months. China is conscious of the productive strides it has been making and of a new-found material strength. That may explain in part another recent development. Regular Chinese troops have established ten strong points, with permanent buildings, within the borders of Burma—one of them thirty miles in from the China-Burma frontier. This also represents a sharp change. Up until very recently the Chinese Communists had been scrupulously correct in respecting Burmese territory despite the provocative tactics of the Chinese Nationalist soldiers that had taken refuge there. With marked gains in last spring's Burmese elections and a new agreement which will permit political infiltration in the adjoining Kingdom of Laos, the Communists are again moving ahead and exerting new pressure on Southeast Asia.

Both sides of this coin manifest a pattern of aggression that is tragically familiar in our times. To reject any good opportunity to find out all we can about so determined and formidable a foe is hardly good statesmanship at this point.

POLITICS AND PLATFORMS

SEVERAL EVENTS of recent weeks have served to underline how hard it is, in the dusty arena of practical action, to distinguish between prudence and inertia, or to mark off accurately the limits of true courage, true compromise and true cowardice. A case in point was provided by the efforts—often agonizing and always delicate—of the Democrats to write a civil rights plank that would hold both the Northern liberals and the embattled Southern conservatives.

One of the key points at issue was, of course, whether or not the plank should, by name, uphold the Supreme Court decision on segregation or ignore it. Adlai Stevenson wanted the decision affirmed, as did most of the liberals from the large Northern cities (where there is also a large Negro vote). Paul Butler, national chairman of the Democratic party, wanted the decision ignored, as did virtually every political leader from the South. The Northern Democrats, in effect, wanted a civil rights plank they could campaign with; the Southern Democrats wanted a plank they could live with.

Such a situation, involving an impasse between two opposing views, would seem one which called for a ringing declaration of principles which each faction would be willing to defend to the death, and to die shouting "Coward" at one's opponents and "No compromise" to one's adherents.

But, in the realm of politics at least, a kind of rough-and-ready, pragmatic Hegelianism fortunately takes over, and from the antithetical positions wrings a form of synthesis. Thus a Hubert Humphrey emerges to declare that the civil rights plank need not explicitly affirm the Supreme Court decision, but should embody the realization that the race issue demands an "understanding of the South's problems." "We know you are not going to kill racial prejudice overnight," he said, "no matter how many platforms you write."

It was the same Senator Humphrey who actually led the floor fight for the strong civil rights plank in the Democratic convention of 1948, and thus precipitated the revolt of the Dixiecrats. One man's "compromise" is so often another man's "cowardice" that it would be easy to say that, by calling for "patience and understanding" toward the South, Mr. Humphrey was merely trying to improve his chances for the Vice Presidential nomination. Such a verdict would be easy, but only because it overlooks Mr. Humphrey's voting record in the Senate, and discounts the fact that he may, in the years between 1948 and 1956, have come to another, and perhaps more accurate, estimate of what a party's platform is, not ideally perhaps, but in practice.

In 1884 James G. Blaine, the Republican candidate for the Presidency, said: "Formerly, the platform was of first importance. . . The Presidential candidate was held closely to the text, and he made no excursions beyond it. Now the position of the candidate, as defined by himself, is of far more weight with the voters." What was said seventy-two years ago is probably even more true today, and shows what a party's set of professed objectives really is—something less than a "platform" on which all its members can take their stand and something more of an umbrella large enough to shield conflicting factions from the scorching sun of the campaign.

Those with an interest in civil rights will, we hope, pay less attention to party platforms and partisan cries of "courage," "compromise" and "cowardice" than to the present promises and past performances of the individual candidates.

THE SUEZ CRISIS

THE REFUSAL of Egypt to attend the current talks in London designed to settle the Suez question only serves to indicate the gravity of the problem which the Conference faces. It will be difficult, indeed, for the nations to arrive at that "peaceful settlement" which they profess to seek, if Egypt, a principal to the dispute, is represented at the conference table by an empty chair.

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The fact that the present conference will, in all probability, be unable to find a formula which will satisfy the interests of all the nations concerned in the dispute means that the present talks in London may widen, rather than heal, the divisions which now exist among blocs of the conferring nations.

England, for example, has already talked in terms of settling the Suez question by force of arms, if need be, and the fact that English troops are en route to the Mediterranean and that President Nasser has formed a "liberation" army indicate how seriously the world must take the possibility of armed conflict in the Middle East. In such an unfortunate event, the United States, despite its strongest efforts to remain "uncommitted," might well be unable to do so. The declaration of the Arab countries that they would join the forces of Egypt in the event of an attack could well mean an Arab offensive against Israel. The Arab nations already blame much of their troubled situation upon "Zionist plots," and the surge of national pride and sense of power which would mark the mobilization of the Arab world might well seek an outlet against Israel, to whose defense in case of attack the United States is pledged.

England, however, has been speaking in less bellicose tones than those which she used in the early days of the Suez crisis, and one can only hope that the subsequent cooling of passions has enabled the British government to see clearly the dangers of setting a fuse to the highly combustible situation. But if Britain is speaking now in softer tones, she is, nevertheless, still urging a questionable and highly dangerous course of action in the event that a peaceful solution cannot be found. Reliable sources report that Britain is now convinced that there can be no settlement of the Suez problem so long as President Nasser remains in power; as a consequence, she will attempt, by economic and diplomatic pressures, to bring about his overthrow.

This course of action seems all the more attractive to Britain because Gamal Nasser has begun to fulfill his ambitions of being the power-figure of the Arab world, and a solid bloc of Arab nations would hasten the effective disappearance of English power from a region it had long dominated.

This fact lends credence to the suspicion that many of Britain's actions and reactions regarding the Suez crisis have been motivated almost as much by a desire to "cut Nasser down to size," as by a desire to insure freedom of navigation through the canal. But cutting President Nasser down to size is hardly a worthy or practical objective for British foreign policy. It is, certainly, one to which the United States cannot lend present support, for the means which Britain has thus far discussed either threaten our own interests in the Middle East or contain the seeds of the third world war.

GOING UP

ONE OF the Eisenhower Administration's most impressive achievements is the way it has held inflation in check since removing wage and price controls. It now looks as if this record is up against its severest challenge. When the steelmakers passed on to the consumer part of the cost of the steelworkers' latest wage increase, manufacturers from all over began to announce higher prices for their products. Perhaps the steel strike had cut into existing stockpiles more heavily than had been anticipated or most of the new prices were announced for future orders utilizing 6.25 per cent higher steel, but manufacturers of many commodities did seem very prompt in confronting industrial and home consumers with bigger price tags. Among the higher-price items prominently mentioned are electric fans, building equipment, tractors, refrigerators and washing machines, auto parts, oil-field and mining equipment and 1957 cars. Many of these products in turn will hike the production costs of other commodities. If this trend gains more momentum and is not sufficiently checked by other factors, much of his recent wage boost will soon be of little tangible effect for the individual worker, while those on pensions and moderate fixed incomes will greatly feel the pinch.

REPUBLICAN INTELLECTUALS

AS THE big campaign draws nearer, echoes of 1952 become more pronounced. One of these has to do the adherence of the "intellectuals." Because of the Stevenson manner and the eminence of a number of his supporters, scorn was poured upon the "eggheads" in the early stages of the campaign. This was never wholly abandoned, but fierce competition for various college faculties also sprang up. The Democrats would come up with an impressive list and total of sages from a certain university only to have their rivals reply with an even bigger list—on which research assistants, building custodians, athletic coaches and graduate students figured prominently. This time the "egghead" note is sounded early. The Committee of the Arts and Sciences for Eisenhower already boasts several artists and educators of some prominence. And if CASE develops a sweep that is wide enough, it may even succeed in relegating the debate about "eggheads" in politics to the backseat it deserves.

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Impressions of America

"DE TOCQUEVILLE FORECAST A CENTURY AGO THAT AMERICA WOULD LEAD THE WAY TO A CLASSLESS SOCIETY. MANY AMERICANS THINK THIS PROPHECY IS ALREADY FULFILLED."

MICHAEL P. FOGARTY

THE SIXTY-FOUR-thousand-dollar question for anyone who visits this country is "What do you think of America?" Since last January my wife and I have kept house in America, talked and argued in it, and ridden by car eight thousand miles across and around it, not counting trains, planes, or local driving, and the longer we stay and the further we go the less we know what the answer is. But we think that any answer must include these considerations.

First of all, that myth about the frontier being closed. Closed? The whole place is a frontier. I have never met a country so full of loose ends and of people working their heads off to get them all properly tied up. The older parts of your towns look as if they had been dumped on the prairie out of an ashcan; but we have also seen in America more fine modern architecture, more attractive projects and well-designed machines for living in, than in any European country. Your race problem is serious, but it is also half solved. Your social security system, including its private and industrial components, is a pain in the neck to the foreign inquirer. It is full of holes, and nearly everything in it has been done better somewhere else. You have no family allowances, for instance, and your Guaranteed Annual Wage schemes are not a patch on what the Dutch have had since 1949.

But take this thing of shreds and tatters and look more closely at the principles underlying it and the way functions are divided among the family, the industry, and local, State, and Federal governments. See how the whole thing has evolved over the last twenty years, and is evolving still. It dawns on you that a few years hence America may have a social security system not merely as comprehensive as anything in Europe, but corresponding much more closely to subsidiarity and the other principles of Catholic social thought. Your labor unions strike more often, recruit a smaller proportion of the eligible workers, and have apparently less to say about co-determination and consultation than those of many European countries. But look at the actual content of American collective agreements and the conduct of day-to-day industrial relations, and you realize that American labor and management are closing in on these problems actually faster than in the more publicized cases on the other side of the Atlantic.

Your foreign policy has been through one major change since the war, and seems to be on the verge of another. Your schools have solved the problem of quantity better than that of quality, but everywhere I go I find educators working at honors courses, or Great Books courses, or setting up experimental schools, to solve just this remaining problem. I find business men complaining, not that the educators are going too fast, but that they are not doing enough to define new and higher standards or to sell these to the people who could help in realizing them.

I COULD go on talking like this for hours. Your business men remain as revolutionary as ever, leveling social distinctions and inspiring the dynamism of your whole society. There are movements on foot among the designers, the musicians, and half a dozen others. But let me take one case which happens to concern me specially, that of Catholic Action. De Tocqueville forecast a century ago that America would lead the way towards the classless society. I have been surprised at the number of Americans who think that this prophecy is fulfilled already. They are genuinely shocked to be told how limited the range of recruitment to top executive posts in American industry has been, or what little difference there has been (and that in favor of Britain) between social mobility in Britain and in the United States.

But they are shocked chiefly because they are aware of that other real and unparalleled advance towards social equality which is the most attractive feature of American life. We met at one point a group of exiled British wives, GI brides. They were from every sort of social background in Britain, and had married men with every sort of job here. As they sat relaxing around, for once, a real pot of tea, one said to the other: "You know, in England I would never have met people like

Mr. Fogarty, The Commonweal's correspondent in Britain, recently completed a visiting lectureship at the University of Notre Dame.

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you." It is true; she never would, not at least on the same footing of equality. But here the engineer's wife and the carpenter's wife live in the same sort of house, ride in the same sort of car, send their children to the same school and join the same PTA. Why should they not also have tea together?

But this move towards equality also raises problems. Catholic Action has still to face the remaining problems of social inequality and poverty: segregation, unequal chances in the schools, Mexican or Puerto Rican immigration, those remaining snobberies and social distinctions of which one becomes aware as soon as one has lived even a little time in an American neighborhood. But, wandering around from the NCWC to the YCW, the CFM, and the rest, it becomes clear that *the* problem on which all of them, more or less explicitly, are closing in is that of a world where the janitor rides to church in as good a car as the company president. How do you convince people in such a world that they still have problems? What are these problems—of neighborliness, public and social responsibility, human relations, or the right use of material wealth? What do and should the Liturgy and the Mystical Body mean in such people's lives?

To a European observer, especially one who knows the Continent of Europe, American Catholic Action appears as unfinished, as full of loose ends and unsolved problems, as everything else in American life. But it is also all very exciting, from our point of view as well as yours. We too are heading for the classless society as fast as our national income will carry us. Do not be deceived by the sour-grapes talk of those who condemn the American way of life as flat and materialistic. Would we buy it if we could? You bet! But we in Britain are nowhere near as close to classlessness in everyday life as you are. And it is you in America who—as De Tocqueville forecast about the move towards the classless society in general—have the future problems of world Catholic Action directly facing you.

BUT IN any case, just how uniform, flat, and materialistic *is* America? I grant that you are more highly socialized than any other people I have met. We in Britain have only a Welfare State. You have a socialized society. De Tocqueville said you suffered from the tyranny of the majority. David Riesman diagnosed other-direction. Among those who have rubbed this and similar points in to us on the way round America are quite a few whose judgment I would not trust an inch.

But there have also been business men worried that their young executives rely too much on the group and too little on themselves; educators worried over free speech, as well as over the difficulty of making room in the schools for originality and excellence; foreigners, like ourselves, surprised at the thinness of American skins; Catholic Action leaders wondering how to create the autonomy and detachment which are the basis of independent judgment. In all this smoke, we think there must be quite a little fire.

But let us again look a little more closely. A lot of roadside standardization, the juke-box materialism, the Cokes and Foot-Long Hot Dogs which shock the sensitive European intellectual are no more than a public convenience, the useful and welcome equipment of the roadside. It seems to me a good thing that an American family should be able to get into its car and ride off together for a vacation, or just to see the country. I wish more English families could. And if you ride, you appreciate those standard roadside businesses. Your motels are wonderful, like your kitchens and supermarkets; and please take that not as irony, but as the comment of a traveler who on many, many evenings has been happy to get there. Your plumbing is not always what it is made out to be; but we admit it is generally pretty good. So are your cafes, at least at the level of the ordinary family which does not want to spend twelve dollars on a meal.

So let us leave the roadside businesses out and look at some of the things that matter. Is the charge that your country lacks variety? But some of you wear Western hats and do business in silver dollars, while others are just New Yorkers. Some eat grits, others (how right they are) Rocky Mountain trout. Some, over on the West Coast, talk almost Anglo-English; others, in the South, in deep, weary, tones which make social intercourse for the English visitor a guessing game, admittedly a very hospitable one. Some, if it comes to that, talk Spanish and others Navajo, others again Polish. Some are isolationists, others join World Affairs Councils. Some (I speak of the Middle West, but people tell me it pales next to Texas) greet you like a long-lost brother, while others treat you with the suspicion you deserve. And if Will Herberg is right, American culture is in any case divided, like Gaul, into three parts, Catholic, Protestant, and Jew.

Are you supposed to lack history? Tell them at Monticello or Mesa Verde. Or is it that you lack those strong and sometimes strange personalities which liven

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up life in Europe? Then what about Papago Joe, who roams round Winslow, Arizona, with dog and gun and ax and donkey-cart, bearded like the pioneers of old? Or, lifting up to a very different level of vision and culture, what of Walter Paepcke, who thought America needed a Salzburg, a mountain center of culture and sport, and took time out to create one, by now already half-finished, at Aspen, Colorado?

It is true that America needs more privacy and contemplation. So does England. But has anyone stopped those who have gone out into Kentucky, and elsewhere, and set up the contemplative life as the Church understands it? And what of those good men and true who have beaten off the attacks on free speech with, so far as I can see, a very great deal of success? I have rarely met a less intimidated set of professors than my colleagues at Notre Dame. As I write this, I happen to have been sitting in on a conference of executives, of all sorts of backgrounds and opinions, taking time out (company time—that startles a European!) to discuss ideas from the Great Books.

YOU HAVE variety, but you also have social responsibility. When I say that you have a socialized society, I mean this in a positive, favorable, as well as a critical sense. I have yet to meet a Western nation where people are on the whole so much aware of the community and of their responsibility in and to it. I know that sounds hollow to those who watch the empty chairs at union meetings and the low polls at many elections. But all is not unions and politics. Add together all the kinds of neighborhood social, community, religious, industrial, and political associations. Add the funds, the trusts, the foundations. Consider how the rich and the not so rich contribute money as well as time to public purposes, and how your tax laws encourage them to do it. Consider, in fact anything from the Ford Foundation to the finances of St. Anthony's parish at South Bend. Put your whole record of community service together, and what European country can equal it? Your schools may fail in some ways, but not, by comparison with other countries, in inspiring the wish and ability to take part in community life. That is one reason we liked having our children in school in America for a while.

There is something here, as with your contribution to the classless society, which is very relevant to the rest of the world. Today we are getting beyond the simple antithesis of individualism and public control. We know the limits within which each of these must be confined if people are to live the good life, and we know that, confined within these limits, neither individualism nor control nor both together are enough to keep society going. Industrially and otherwise, the problem is to find the socially responsible man who will retain his own personal dynamism without the ruthless and selfish incentives of the old individualism, and without the compulsions of old-style industrial discipline or the absolute State.

May it not be that here too you Americans have the rest of the world's problem by the tail? In fact, I think you are further towards solving it than many of your critics would allow. David Riesman says you are over-run with other-direction. But Kurt Lewin not so long ago put it rather differently. He said that the typical American personality has, so to speak, plastic outer rings, thanks to which an American makes contacts quickly and adapts easily to teamwork and social responsibility. But the inner core of an American personality is, he said, far harder than that typical in, for instance, Germany; and Lewin knew what he was talking about, since it was in Germany that his career as a psychologist began. Thanks to that hard inner core, if Lewin is right, an American is more autonomous (Riesman's word), more capable of steering his own course, than many Europeans. My own guess is that, in spite of all the changes of the last generation, Lewin's estimate of the American character remains nearer the truth than Riesman's.

LET ME sum up one last impression of America in a parable from road-building. When a British engineer rebuilds a road, he bars off half the pavement and puts up stop-lights. You ride past the construction area slowly, but comfortably and in order, on the untouched half of the pavement. In some American states they do it differently. They rip the whole surface off the road, perhaps for several miles, and re-grade and resurface each section as a whole. Meantime you ride through in a dust-storm, grinding along in low gear behind some truck, with the needle climbing towards boiling-point. You emerge finally with your windshield scarred as if with the signs of battle. I am prepared to believe—I do not know enough civil engineering to check it—that the American way makes possible a quicker and cheaper job. But it is hell while it lasts.

That seems to me an epitome of American life as we have seen it. Changes are going on, and they are good changes; more often than not, we have liked the finished result. There is plenty of dynamism, and I for one would not have it otherwise. But I do not think you have yet found out as much as, say, the Scandinavians or the Swiss, or the Dutch, about how to combine a high rate of industrial and social change with living the good life now. It is not a question of sacrificing the future to the present. The problem is to build for the future, as you are doing, *and also* to preserve the continuity, smoothness, and current amenities which mean so much to civilized life, the opposite, you might say, of life on a construction site.

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Priest of the Slums

EAST SIDE slums are never pretty, but in summer the crowded tenements look more forbidding than at any other time of year. Their occupants fill the narrow, hot, crowded streets looking for coolness. Every block has its "social clubs," in front of which men stripped to the waist listen to the ball game and play poker, while their wives keep an eye on the children. Despite the attempts of the police to close them, the fire hydrants run continually all day and well into the night, while the youngsters dart in and out of the stream, or direct the water at some unfortunate motorist driving past with his car window open. A good number of the older boys and girls crowd into the subways of the city and head towards some outlying swimming pool, so flooding it on particularly hot days that it takes on the appearance of a huge neighborhood bath tub. Boys who don't have the money to go to the Island sit around playing cards or play stick-ball in the truck-crowded streets, while the girls just watch or walk around aimlessly.

At night the streets come alive with people, and are so congested that it is difficult to walk. The rock 'n roll records of the juke boxes, the blare of portable radios and the constant din of talking and shouting make it impossible to sleep before midnight. It is here that I have lived for several years as a curate in an Italian-American parish.

Because of the great number of national parishes built during the tides of Italian immigration, my parish church is one of many situated in this very compact area. The farthest one would have to walk to church in this section would be about three short blocks. Yet the attendance at Mass is so small that it never ceases to shock those who come from the outside. So often you are asked, "Why?" Why is it that there are so few, relatively speaking, going to Mass when the entire section is supposedly Catholic? Why doesn't the Church have more influence on the lives of these people, so many of whom have been trained in the parish school? One cannot give a simple answer to such questions. He can only give observations he has made.

ONE OF the illusions many have is that it is possible for someone, merely by living in a slum area or even by devoting himself to helping its inhabitants, to come to understand their ways of thinking. I have often met people who choose to live here for the sole purpose of sharing the poverty and misery of the people. For the most part they are sincere and earnest, especially those who help Dorothy Day at the "Catholic Worker" on Chrystie Street. Some, however, are merely feeding their pride and relish the "prestige" which their Mott St. address gives them among their less self-sacrificing friends. These people soon weary of the whole thing and go off looking for new "experiences." But it is hard even for the sincere ones to be mentally like those they live among.

First of all, many who live in slums are very well-off financially, but choose to live there for reasons ranging from national loyalty to the fact that their livelihood depends upon it. Some are so involved in the neighborhood rackets that they could not leave even if they wished to, while still others will not leave because here they are "somebody" while elsewhere they would be unknown and perhaps unacceptable.

It is even more difficult to grasp the state of mind of those who wish to leave but cannot because they have no "out." They are trapped in social quicksand, which drags them down deeper and deeper into the depths of poverty and despair. There is no choice for them; they must accept a situation that is bearable only as long as they know no other life. However as they—especially the young white-collar workers—come in contact with others, life in a slum becomes a curse and their Mulberry St. address a stigma. It is this feeling of despair, this sense of frustration that is so hard to grasp fully. No matter who he is, or what his motives, a person who lives in a slum area but also knows that he can terminate that stay at the moment he wishes, can never grasp the hopelessness of one caught there. Physical presence is not sufficient to obtain the outlook on life which those people have who live there of necessity.

Further, the priest and the dedicated layman who try to serve Christ in His poor have some realization of the virtue and value of poverty. They understand that it is possible for a Christian to elevate his physical destitution into a source of spiritual riches. Such a state of mind is rarely found among the poor themselves, even among the more devout. In all fairness, it must be admitted that the virtue of poverty is much more easily

The author is a parish priest who, for obvious reasons, wishes to remain anonymous.

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grasped by those who take that state freely than by those who have it thrust upon them. I do not wish to give the impression that it is a state people should accept impassively and stoically without any attempt to improve it. Every means possible should be used to remove those conditions that hold so many in economic slavery. But so often, the priest often finds that poverty so hardens a man's soul that he is led to reject God, Who is looked upon as the cause of a situation that is the result, not of the Divine Will, but man's greed. Because, paradoxically, so few of the poor have any concept of the value of poverty the task of the priest is greatly complicated.

ALTHOUGH the great wave of Italian migration into this area has passed, the traditional prejudices of the Latin mentality still find here one of their last strongholds. The great majority of men do not attend Mass, but leave such things to the women of the family. Morning Masses are for the most part attended by the older women, joined in the autumn by some of the school children. It is very depressing to realize that despite all one's efforts the majority of boys will cease to go to church with any regularity once they leave the parochial school. The girls continue to go, but no parish can prosper spiritually without the men of the family attending to their religious obligations. The one consolation is that more and more boys are going to Catholic high schools and, as a result, the number going to Mass is increasing. Even they, however, are not completely free of their environment, for many of them go to Confession at least once a month, yet do not go to Communion because they do not want to be seen doing so by the "boys."

Another basic problem is the lack of adequate living space. Two rooms are often the only quarters for families of from four to eight people. Because boys and girls are thrown into such close proximity, sex ceases to be a mystery for them at an early age. For many, if not for most, married couples, birth control seems the only answer to their problems. The Church's teaching on this practice is either ignored or attacked as an "old-fashioned law" that makes an already difficult situation impossible.

A crowded tenement apartment destroys any attempt at family life. Husbands spend hours in the "clubs" while the wives gossip on the corner. The older boys form into gangs, each one in a sense controlling a definite section of the neighborhood, and many of the girls become more or less attached to them.

Numerous rackets flourish in this atmosphere. Gambling begins among the very young. It is difficult to walk a block without seeing eight-year-old boys playing cards for money. Dice games that go on for an entire weekend are not rare, and a few men have deserted their families and fled the neighborhood because they couldn't pay their losses and knew the penalty for "welching." The loan shark thrives in this water, and is found even among teenagers who, like their elders, lend money at exorbitant interest to those of their own age-group. Although there is little addiction among the members of this parish, many are involved in narcotics, and justify this by saying they don't sell the "stuff" to "their own," but only to "outsiders."

THE PRIEST can find no easy answer to these problems. Few wish to speak to him of their difficulties. One reason for this is common among all Catholics. When one speaks to a priest of a personal moral problem he realizes that a definite—and often difficult—course of action will be demanded of him. For this reason, Catholics often prefer to tell their troubles to a bartender than to a priest. A priest by his very vocation cannot be a mere sympathetic listener. His duty is to instruct, advise and, when necessary, even forbid under severe penalties. Knowing this, many prefer the status quo to the advice of the priest who will demand radical changes in it. There is, further, the natural reluctance to be seen talking to anyone who even resembles authority. One of the first lessons a youngster learns is that "talking" is the most serious violation of the code the "boys" live by.

Another obstacle facing the priest is an utter lack of appreciation of the finer things in life. The supernatural is built upon the natural, yet the intellectual atmosphere breathed in a slum is poisonous to the mind. The inability to grasp the natural virtues make it difficult to understand the supernatural ones. The D. A. haircut, the pegged pants and loose belt, the pointed suede shoes, the wide-brimmed hats among the boys; the clash of colors, the poorly applied makeup, the tight toreador pants and leather jackets among the girls, show not only bad taste but a lack of that sensitivity of soul so important if one is to grasp the deeper and more fruitful doctrines of the Faith. Since this is so, the priest finds that he most frequently emphasizes the negative aspects of the Faith—sin, death, judgment and Hell.

However, the strongest link in the chain that binds people to their slum mentality is human respect. "What will people say?" The men stay away from Mass because, if they went, they would fear "what the boys will say." Women practice birth control because, if they got "caught," they know "what the neighbors will say." Boys fight, gamble, cheat because if they don't they are afraid of "what the fellows will say." Every life in a tenement building is an open book for all living there to read. Human respect shapes their lives.

In the slums as elsewhere the priest is often a lonely figure. He is looked upon as a salesman for a product

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that people don't want to buy. He is a constant reminder to his people of a way of life that they secretly admire but often lack the moral courage to follow. He sees his young following in the footsteps of the tawdry idols of the slum. He finds his kids rolling drunks on the Bowery, or armed with clubs and knives looking for Puerto Ricans. For a priest these are not just "anti-social" actions; they are sins and these are souls which he is asked by God to help save. This is the motive—if you wish, the fear—that drives the priest on despite discouragement.

The priest further realizes the slums are the result of forces that are complex and varied. He has little or no control over them and so is powerless to change the physical aspect of the slum. His fight is primarily against the spiritual wounds the slum inflicts on its inhabitants. They are deep and are often fatal, but the priest tries to heal them despite the tremendous odds against him. The work is, from a human point of view, so often marked with failure that it seems to achieve few visible results.

Despite this, the "slum" priest is for the most part a dedicated follower of Christ who loves his people with great love. They are, it is true, the cause of his discouragement and weariness, but they are also the cause of his joy. He realizes that he must never stop trying to bring these souls closer to God, because it is only by so doing that his own soul will find Him.

FROM TEL AVIV

Israel Today: Modern Sparta

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN

A CARTOON or a joke can sometimes sum up a complicated political situation better than a long and well-documented analysis. Such a joke made the rounds during Mr. Hammarskjold's last visit to Israel and the Arab States. Towards the end of his stay a *causerie* appeared in *Jerusalem Post,* the excellent English language daily published in Jewish Jerusalem; it was witty, pointed and caustic to such a degree that it made the whole of Israel laugh. It ran roughly like this. One night, while asleep in his beautiful bedroom in the UN Headquarters in Jerusalem in the neutralized zone near the city Mr. Hammarskjold, or "Dag" as the Israel papers familiarily call him, had a terrible nightmare. He dreamed that during one of his talks in Cairo, Egypt's General Nasser suddenly told him that he had thought things over and was quite willing to meet Israel's Premier Ben Gurion anywhere he liked in order to reach a definite peaceful agreement between the Arabs and Israelis. When Mr. Hammarskjold arrived in Jewish Jerusalem immediately afterwards and told Premier Ben Gurion about Nasser's proposals, he found to his amazement that the Premier was equally willing to reach a peaceful settlement as soon as possible.

Most worried, for this was a development which went far beyond the scope of his mission, Mr. Hammarskjold cabled the news to the UN headquarters in New York, with the conclusion: "Am in absurd position—please send instructions." The first violent reaction came from the Russian delegate, indignantly claiming that Hammarskjold had gone far beyond what he was instructed to do and that he ought to be replaced as soon as possible. The prospect of definite peace in the Middle East was most disquieting for the Russians, since it would deprive them of an excuse for arming the Arab states in the hope of gaining access to an area otherwise difficult to penetrate.

The next reaction came from the French and was nearly as indignant as the Russian, for the French were most worried about the prospect of being left alone in Algeria with Arab guerrillas armed by the Eastern bloc. For them the tension around Israel is a most important diversion. In fact, the interdependence between Israel and Algeria is very close and a critical situation in one of these theaters has an immediate repercussion on the other.

Finally, a stern protest came from Great Britain, most anxious not to lose the best pretext for keeping troops at Cyprus and other strategic points in the Middle East. Even the American reaction was not favorable and Mr. Hammarskjold was finally accused of having "upset the stable chaos in the Middle East."

At this point he was awakened in a cold sweat by the rattling of a distant machine gun reaching him through the open window. With a sigh of relief he turned over and fell asleep again, satisfied that it was all a dream and that he could resume the next day his discussions about details of the armistice agreement.

Mr. Kumlien, The Commonweal's correspondent in Rome, has recently completed an extensive tour of the Middle East.

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THE OBVIOUS point of the ancedote is that too many great powers are interested in the continuation of the tension in the Middle East, as long as it remains short of war. The situation is also obviously useful for many of the Arab states. Precisely this is the tragedy for Israel, for it is compelled to be prepared for war to such a point that it makes a normal life for its inhabitants almost impossible. An armaments race is on, since the Arab States are armed not only by the Eastern bloc, but even by many private wholesale dealers in obsolete or modern arms all over the world. Both sides can afford it, for the Arab rulers are among the richest men in the world owing to their ever-increasing oil royalties, and Israel has behind it the truly amazing spirit of sacrifice of wealthy Jews all over the world. But the race costs the inhabitants of Israel, privately and individually, much more than it costs the inhabitants of the Arab countries, who are spread over a large area and are so much more numerous.

There is certainly no other country in the world which is militarized to such a point as Israel is now, for not only able-bodied men, but also old people, as well as women and children are trained for the eventuality of war and of necessity think and plan in terms of war. This stress increases with every new arms deal concluded by the Arab countries, in spite of the fact that the inhabitants of Israel well realize their individual superiority over their prospective enemies. For the inhabitants of Israel it is more and more difficult to lead normal civilian lives, drafted as they are without interruption for shorter or longer periods of military instruction. The whole country is rapidly developing into a new Sparta.

This stress naturally not only makes normal civilian life increasingly difficult, but makes Israel, the promised land, a sort of anti-climax for many immigrants. Most immigrants are now arriving from North Africa, where the tension between the French and the natives entails increasing dangers for the local Jews. Many of them, coming from unhealthy ghettos constantly exposed to the danger of being looted and burned by infuriated Moslem mobs, are sent directly to the desert settlements in the Southern part of Israel, which are nothing but advanced fortresses, besieged by night by Arab infiltrators, burned by day by a merciless sun and, naturally, surrounded by barbed wire, miles and miles of it. Barbed wire has been for many Jews a permanent part of life, as a result of the barbed wire in the German concentration camps and the barbed wire in the refugee camps afterwards. The concentration and refugee camps are gone, but the barbed wire remains.

This tension "short of war" tends to make daily life so difficult in Israel that it ceases to attract more immigrants. There is no doubt that the Jews born in Israel will stay there always, no matter what happens. But the immigrants from Europe, North Africa and the Middle East cannot but dream of the nice, normal careless lives people lead in other countries and earnestly long for such a life. Some of them wonder whether their sacrifices are really worth it. The United States, for instance, has always exercised a much greater attraction for Jews the world over than Israel ever has. And the more dangerous and difficult life becomes in Israel, the greater will be the attraction of Western Europe and, particularly, of the United States. Conversely, comparatively few Jews from the prosperous countries of Northwestern Europe and North America have settled in Israel.

Arnold Toynbee is not particularly popular in Israel. First of all, he has in one of his books compared the Jewish people as such to "a fossil," a comparison which the inhabitants of Israel resent very much, since they feel more alive than ever. Secondly, he has compared the bold Zionist experiment to the experiment made by the Crusaders many centuries ago, which failed, he warns, because the invaders did not establish friendly relations with their neighbors. If Israel fails to do so, it runs the risk of ending up in the same way.

Israel has in fact tried, but its neighbors are more unfriendly than ever. Its neighbors react in exactly the same way toward Israel, as they reacted toward the Crusaders: they tend to expel the "foreign bloc" instead of either assimilating or tolerating it. Obviously, too, many things are now different from what they were in the time of the Crusaders, most notably, the Arab neighbors. They were able to meet the Crusaders on equal terms as far as organization, weapons and civilization were concerned. In fact, they were in some respects even superior to the invaders. Now the invaders are superior to their Arab neighbors. Nevertheless, Toynbee's prophecy has for the Israelis an unpleasant ring about it, and all over the present Israeli territory the ruins of fortifications built with enormous sacrifices by the Crusaders loom like sinister reminders each time that new "incidents" and new victims indicate that "the tension short of war" is ever increasing. And the gnawing doubt remains for many Israelis: in the long run, will all this really prove worth the price that has been paid?

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THE SCREEN

PALE HORSE, BRIGHT RIDER

IT IS not easy to recommend films for children, but "The Phantom Horse" is certainly worth a try. This handsomely-made Japanese movie (the first I've seen with modern sets and costumes) centers on a little boy (played by Yukohiko Iwatare) who is all excited about the birth of a colt on his father's farm on Japan's northernmost island. The boy becomes greatly attached to the horse through its growing up, assorted illnesses and training and is heart-broken, when, after his father's death, the horse has to be sold and sent to Tokyo. The high-strung horse at first doesn't prove a success as a racer, but later, ridden by the boy's brother, the horse wins the big race. The boy, of course, learns his hardest lesson when the horse dies.

The trite story probably won't bother children, who will warm up to the action scenes, the boy-horse theme, the fascinating shots of Japanese youngsters at play and the exciting sequences taken at the race track. American children will be delighted to learn that Japanese children play games and have interests like to theirs and that Japanese city-clamor sounds just like our own. And an extra dividend, especially for adults, is provided by the gorgeous landscapes (the farm is beside the sea) photographed in incredibly beautiful Eastman Color. The continuously appealing photographic effects in Masaichi Nagata's stunning production will hold adults even when the story palls, as will the unaffected acting under Koji Shima's direction. If grown-ups attend "The Phantom Horse" with children who can't read, they may find themselves having to read aloud the English subtitles that translate the Japanese dialogue. In any case, it will be a busy and profitable time for all.

THE children will also enjoy Walt Disney's release, "Davy Crockett and the River Pirates." Some of them may have seen this in serial form in black-and-white on TV, but now in Technicolor and with the story tightened, it seems a little more glamorous as Davy (Fess Parker) with his good friend (Buddy Ebsen) and stalwart crew race from Maysville, Ky., to New Orleans. Their competition, led by Mike Fink (Jeff York) doesn't always play fair as the two keelboats race to their destination, but the movie has plenty of healthy rough-and-tumble which should delight the young and help them vicariously wear off their excess energy. No doubt due to its original chopped-up TV appearance, the film is rather episodic. Its last part, after the race is over and Davy and Mike have become friends, is concerned with their efforts to break up a gang of outlaws who have been throwing the Ohio Valley into panic by disguising themselves as Indians to plunder passing boats. The fighting gets rather violent, so be sure that your youngsters can take it.

With this latest "Davy Crockett" film, Walt Disney is also releasing a 33-minute short called "Man in Space." An illustrated lecture using live-action scenes and animated cartoons, it traces the development of rockets from the ancient Chinese to the present, and then goes into the future by showing what interplanetary travel on a four-stage rocket will be like. Although some of this material gets a little heady, it should hold audiences of all ages.

FOR CHILDREN who like pictures about children, there is "Toy Tiger," in which charming little Tim Hovey plays a boarding-school youngster whose father is dead and whose career-woman mother (Laraine Day) hasn't much time to pay attention to him. To impress his school mates, Tim invents a father—a big-game hunter. When commercial artist Jeff Chandler, who works for Tim's mother, turns up on the scene, Tim is able to persuade him to pose as his father. Tall, handsome Jeff (whose hair in Technicolor, for some reason, is blue) finds himself in all kinds of scrapes when he cooperates with Tim's never-ending fantasies. Some of this is fun, especially the episodes involving the two brothers who run the school (Cecil Kellaway and Richard Haydn) but the whole thing gets to be a dragged-out bore when Tim's mother gets in on the act.

ALTHOUGH it's decidedly not *for* children, "These Wilder Years" is *about* children. It's an elaborately-made soap opera in which James Cagney, now a millionaire, is determined to locate the illegimate son he sired twenty years ago. Finding Barbara Stanwyck, who runs the home that gave Cagney's son out for adoption, equally determined not to reveal the names of the people who adopted the boy, Cagney puts his clever lawyer (Walter Pidgeon) on the case. And when it looks as if Cagney is going to win in court, Barbara plays her trump card. Full well may you wonder why such a good cast was assembled for this tear-jerker, but as you watch them act out the roles under Roy Rowland's skillful direction, you find that the sappy story takes on a fascinating quality, and you have to hang around to learn what happens. The principals are well supported by Don Dubbins as the grown-up son, Betty Lou Keim as an expectant mother waiting out her time at the adoption home, and others. But the ending is pat and still leaves some questions unanswered, after a few uneasy moments when Cagney's money seems to be winning out over decency and good sense.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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THE STAGE

WAITING FOR HICKEY

MR. ALFRED Kazin has lately written in his handsome tribute to Dreiser, "It was not art he worked with but knowledge, some new and secret knowledge. There is an overwhelming impression that puzzles and troubles us because we cannot trace it to its source . . . Something is happening that tastes of fear, of the bottom loneliness of human existence, that just barely breaks into speech from the depths of our own souls . . . every line hurts . . . because it is all too much like 'reality' to be 'art.' "

So it is too, I would suggest, with Eugene O'Neill, whose later plays—most notably "The Iceman Cometh" and "Long Day's Journey Into Night"—stupefy with the potency of their pain, the massive concentration of their solitude and intent. No escape is possible from them, into style, rhetoric, grace or even "meaning": one is fixed to these rigid structures in a terrible intimacy of torment. Not even time, it would seem, will bring relief, for the moment of these plays is a vision, beyond temporality: the bums and whores and derelicts of "The Iceman Cometh" are immemorial figures in a mathematic demonstration of nothingness, while the family of "Long Day's Journey Into Night" sits in ceremonial postures of horror about one of the tables of eternity. In these unwilled presences and images, O'Neill suggests the tragic resonance much more powerfully than in his dramas of intentional effort: the fables of these plays, detached from their often imperfect realizations, have something of the fiery illumination and profound nullity of the Greek myths of audacity and retribution. It is not, indeed, too much to think of Sisyphus and his "unspeakable penalty," as M. Albert Camus calls it, "in which the whole being is exerted toward accomplishing nothing." If the myth is tragic, M. Camus continues, that is because its hero is conscious, and consciousness screams hideously in several of the O'Neill plays, echoing dully throughout the abyss they illumine.

One sees, then, the futility of assuming the conventional attitudes to O'Neill: that he is a realistic annotator of brutality and squalor, or an ambitious manipulator (penetrating or facile, as you will) of the themes of contemporary bourgeois tragedy. His early plays of the sea, with their lulling, fogbound lyricism, established the first impression, but surely these muted, genuine ancedotes of pathos are projected into life by a mood, rather than by a superficial accuracy of fact and observation; the second judgment rests largely on dramas such as "Strange Interlude" and "Mourning Becomes Electra," those wilful, halting documents of his middle period. But how inertly passive, indeed quite irretrievable, do these now seem to us: beached monsters on the shores of the modern theater, plays that cannot be said to possess the capacity for fruitful and continuous life. "The Iceman Cometh" returns to the moral and social scene of O'Neill's earlier drama, and brings to bear upon it some of the speculative passion of his maturity: here too the sodden characters spin about on a sea of liquor, fanatically clutching their driftwood of human hope, and are all swept finally into the dramatist's tidal parable of the cruelties of reality and the solace of illusion. But the witness in search of a tangible surface of actuality will be thwarted and checked here: no more than Miss Mary McCarthy did, of the original production, will he find on stage "precisely the thing that is most immediately striking and most horrifying in any human drunkard, the sense of the destruction of personality"; and to the disinterested mind, the inquiry into the nature of reality and illusion will seem glib.

Yet in an experience of the whole, these objections recede into irrelevance: one is caught in some close and intolerable distress which abolishes dissent. Mr. Stark Young first recorded this elusive quality in 1926, the curious observations "that the O'Neill plays have less of intellect and theory and more of dramatic instinct and personal upheaval . . . the play proceeds, with whatever agreement or tedium it arouses in us as we hear it, but meanwhile, alongside this agreement or boredom, there runs this personal lyricism, the sense of some individual poignancy whose stress and pressure has evolved these scenes." No one would deny an intermittent tedium to "The Iceman Cometh," nor a lamentable dramatic vulnerability; for if the play harrows by its terror of spirit, it does so too by its schematic rigor, the claustral air of its closed universe, its garrulity, the rasping stutter of much of its language: nor is it relieved, as is the "Long Day's Journey Into Night," by a private tenderness. Yet insistently power gathers—nor do I mean power divorced from sensibility or mind—and spreads its secret vigor through the bones and sinew of the play until, after the pathos, the malaise, the deathly wit, one remembers only the crafty, limber voice of the mad hardware salesman Hickey, drumming, driving his gospel of the corruption of love and hope into the sodden wills of his victims. What is one's ineradicable impression of "The Iceman Cometh"? That pain, personal neurosis, has been transmuted by some unimaginable pressure—at some austere point of inwardness and grief—into the substance of art: how, who shall say? "The more perfect the artist," Mr. T. S. Eliot has irrefutably written, "the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates." In O'Neill, they are identical, and one must confront this paradox in his work. Perhaps it accounts for what I take to be the single large limitation on these plays—their

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absence of the sense of possibility, of a certain magnitude of personality and self, or of the bewildering shapes of reality. But it would be false to deny, at least to these dramas of O'Neill's late maturity, a tragic dilation of experience that is mastering and secure.

Mr. Jose Quintero's production of "The Iceman Cometh" at the Circle in the Square is an act of distinguished homage to O'Neill; not even Mr. Harold Clurman's demonic revival of "Desire Under the Elms" some years ago exceeded it in seizure and revelation of the massive whole. Subtly and with surpassing control, Mr. Quintero has preserved both the play's rigorously inflexible structure, and the tidal movement of awareness which washes and breaks against this. Yet he has lightened the drama's oppressive singleness of mood with pools and eddies of personal feeling: humor that is not harsh but wryly grotesque and touching, with a fearful undertow of despair; transient scenes of finely-wrought portraiture which stand out like patches of color against the bleak lithography of this dead world.

The ensemble Mr. Quintero has gathered is faithful to his vision of O'Neill's intent: all of its members play with a sharp, supple sense of individual personality, yet a disciplined awareness of their place in the larger dramatic scheme. Impossible to praise them all, though Mr. Farrell Pelly devoutly sketches the querulous Harry Hope and Mr. Peter Falk is a harassed, sullen bartender; Miss Dolly Jonah is memorably common as a tart, and the wistful correspondent of Mr. James Greene is forlorn and absolute. The production achieves a deep luster of perfection in the performances of Mr. Addison Powell and Mr. Jason Robards, Jr. Mr. Powell's study of a Harvard man gone to seed is taut and remorseless, continuously alive in all its details, savagely troubling: this is playing of a classical fullness and authority. Mr. Robards has been much honored, and with justice, for his performance as the enigmatic Hickey. This figure, for all O'Neill's didactic intent, is solidly rooted in American experience, and the actor gives to him an unctuous, evangelical fervor, an unnerving jauntiness, which subtly cracks to disclose the corruptions of circumstance and will. Mr. Robards makes of Hickey's disintegration in the last act—at first barely perceptible, then accelerating with a terrible momentum—the most appalling portrait of personal extinction in our theater since Mr. Lloyd Nolan's performance in "The Caine Mutiny Court Martial."

I may add that, in gratitude for the power and fidelity with which Mr. Quintero and his associates have reconstituted this most neglected of her husband's dramas, Mrs. Carlotta Monterey O'Neill has chosen them to present in New York this fall the "Long Day's Journey Into Night," that "play of old sorrow" which is stained with a grief beyond tears, and which may well be the saddest play in our literature for the stage.

RICHARD HAYES.

COMMUNICATIONS

"REPORT ON A REPORT"

Dallas, Texas.

TO the Editors: Engaging in a controversy with The Commonweal gets you nowhere, so I will confine my differences to a simple question.

In your editorial on Mr. Cogley's appearance before the House Un-American Activities Committee (July 27), you state: "Since when has the author of a book been subject to Congressional harassment to determine whether or not the members of the Committee or its staff approve of his conclusions . . ."

It was my understanding that Mr. Cogley was summoned as a witness before the Committee as an employee and researcher for the Fund for the Republic, which has been suspect to the extent that it was repudiated by Mr. Henry Ford, and not because of any book he wrote. As usual, your comment is entirely misleading and confusing.

HELEN ACKENHAUSEN.

REPLY

There is no need to engage in controversy to answer the implied question: why was John Cogley summoned to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee? We based our statement on the reasons offered by members of the Committee. We quoted these extensively in our lead editorials for July 13 and July 27 and repeat only a portion of them now. Before the hearings took place a staff member of the Committee stated that Mr. Cogley was summoned "so he can be interrogated in executive session regarding the assertions made in the report of the Fund for the Republic on so-called blacklisting." And Representative Francis Walter, Head of the Committee, told *Newsday* that "we want to ask Mr. Cogley some pertinent questions which will help us evaluate the studies he has already made." So that there will be no confusion, "report" and "studies" refer to the book Mr. Cogley wrote.

At the end of the hearing, John Cogley asked why he was called. Representative Walter replied: "We called you for the purpose of ascertaining what your sources were in order to determine whether or not your conclusions were the conclusions we would have reached had we embarked on this sort of project."

In spite of these statements we can understand why the writer of the letter may have been misled concerning the reasons why John Cogley was summoned. For the Committee had just previously announced—and suddenly dropped—plans to investigate the Fund for the Republic. And some of the questions directed to Mr. Cogley during the hearing seemed designed less

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to examine his study than to discredit the Fund. But, to repeat, we based our comments on the reasons which the Committee had made public.

THE EDITORS.

"THE ROLE OF WOMAN"

La Grange, Ill.

TO the Editors: I suspect that Norma Krause Herzfeld had her tongue in cheek when she chided The Commonweal in her letter [July 13] for being "Anti-Woman," but when one considers that the two best bits of humor to appear in the Catholic press since January 1 were a short article in "America" by Katharine Byrne and the delightfully humorous letter of Norma Herzfeld, it does seem that we are neglecting the ladies. Frankly, I am of the opinion that if we are to produce a Finley Peter Dunne in our time it will be a Miss or a Mrs.

C. V. HIGGINS.

"RIDDLE OF SEAN O'CASEY"

Columbia, Mo.

TO the Editors: For nearly thirty years critics have been writing articles about the decline of Sean O'Casey. Mr. Mercier's article, [July 13] to do it justice, touches on the most salient arguments and, indeed, his "little Marxian analysis" identifying O'Casey with a poor Protestant *Herrenvolk* is something of a new wrinkle.

Attempts, however, to explain away the inadequacies of the plays by a hostility to Yeats ("Mr. Yeats will never be anything less than a great man."—O'Casey), by an alienation from his fecund source of inspiration in Ireland (Shaw, Farquhar, Goldsmith, Joyce, Sheridan, George Moore, Colum, Wilde?), by a divorce from the theatre and a consequent lessening of the dramatic sense (the later years of Ibsen, Strindberg, and O'Neill?), or a Marxian explanation of his personality do not touch on the merits or faults of the plays themselves and are a bit beside the point.

O'Casey has reiterated it so often that it scarcely seems necessary to repeat his injunction that he is an experimental dramatist. It is a mistake to evaluate his later plays, written in different manners and by different methods, by the early plays, which were written in the Chekhov manner. "Dramatists," O'Casey writes, "cannot go on imitating themselves, and when they get tired of that, imitating others. They must change, must experiment, must develop their power, or try to, if the drama is to live."

"Construction," writes Mr. Mercier, "has never been O'Casey's strong suit as a playwright." This seems to me a misinterpretation. O'Casey once wrote me that there are no rules of dramatic construction. He meant, I think, that there are no established rules of form that are sacrosanct enough not to be broken. Having written his first three long plays with an increasing grasp of Chekhovian structure, O'Casey in his later plays experiments with structure. None of the later plays, for instance, are written in the same manner. Some, like *The Silver Tassie,* combine various styles such as Expressionism, lyricism, and slapstick, or combine farce, satire, and musical comedy like *Purple Dust,* or a truncated conventional structure and lyricism like *Red Roses for Me.*

O'Casey's divorce from the theatre, it seems to me, has been conducive to freedom, to extension and juxtaposition of genres, to experiments in the limitations of form. Indeed, it seems time we stop mumbling vague eulogiums about the genius of the early plays, about the author's language and whimsey, and that we judge the later plays singly and for themselves, rather than by their resemblance to *The Plough and the Stars.*

Eric Bentley has commented that it is impossible to know how good *Cock-a-Doodle Dandy* is, because we haven't done it. Yet the best of O'Casey's later experimental dramas—*The Silver Tassie, Purple Dust, Cock-a-Doodle Dandy* and *The Bishop's Bonfire*—seem among the most provocative of the modern theatre and are begging for the serious study and intelligent interpretation to which they have long been entitled. Perhaps then O'Casey will be accepted not as the lucky primitive who once had a flash of genius, but as the conscious artist and the exciting innovator that he is.

ROBERT HOGAN.

"WAGES AND PRICES"

Baltimore, Md.

TO the Editors: I found Father Martin E. Schirber's discussion of the economic problems raised by the steel wage-price rise [August 10] most interesting. With him, I believe wages and prices are chasing each other down a blind alley. It is futile to blame "labor" or "management" for this tail-chasing or for the rest of us to choose up sides. The problem is not who is to blame but what do we do about it.

Father Schirber has one suggestion. Key wage increases to the increases in productivity. More and more, this formula is being repeated by people quite properly exasperated at the futility of the present spiral. However, this is too moderate and narrow an approach. It assumes that the existing economic relationships are the only feasible ones and ignores the fundamental fact that we are on the threshold of a new era. We face a new "industrial revolution," based on atomic energy and automation, just as two centuries ago the world faced the advent of steam and the "factory system." Having but recently achieved only a modest success in harnessing the old "revolution," we should

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take heed lest the same errors be repeated.

With a rosy prospect, this is the time for boldness —for a new approach to labor-management negotiations. This is not the time for settling for productivity increases or shifting to "fringe benefits" like the Guaranteed Annual Wage. All these are needed but they are merely refinements of older concessions. What is needed is for the unions to seek means for acquiring corporate stock for themselves and their members. This would provide the means for raising the economic and social status of the workers and at the same time providing part of the large accumulations of capital which will be needed to make atomic energy and automation effective. This need for capital and stability provides the occasion by which "labor" can better its lot by aiding rather than pulling against "management."

Unless something like this is attempted, the people will lack an effective voice in the corporation decisions which will affect the kind of society we will have. We know how the steam-factory "revolution" came out. Let us not lose the courage of our experience so soon.

NICHOLAS VARGA.

BOOKS

Little Nobleman, Great Saint, Continued Paradox

ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA. By Leonard Von Matt and Hugo Rahner, S.J. Translated from the German by John Murray, S.J. Regnery. $6.50.

By PHILIP SCHARPER

THE CONTEMPORARY historian, Rene Fulop-Miller, states in *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits* that in his estimation the two most fascinating figures of modern history are Lenin and Ignatius Loyola. It would be easy to argue, of course, that they form at best an uneasy alliance, with personalities as different as the vision of man and the world which each held and bequeathed to his followers. Yet, in a deeper view, despite their differences, these men are remarkably alike: each labored mightily from the heart of a great conviction which was far less the result of intellectual analysis than of intense inward experience; each has laid his hand upon the world and changed it; each remains, despite the wealth of detailed information we possess about him, an ultimately mysterious person, the full source of whose power yet remains secret and defies the definitive biography.

Certainly this biography of Ignatius, with one hundred pages of text by Father Rahner, and more than two hundred photographs by Leonard Von Matt, is far from definitive. But this fact is a measure of the subject, not the book. For Father Rahner's brief text is a model of hagiography — historically precise, judicious in its evaluations, direct in its style and humble before its subject. Leonard Von Matt's photographs, each of which is superb, are in the truest sense, *illustrations,* throwing light upon the text by summoning again the world Ignatius knew—the type of armor he wore in the prideful jousts of his knighthood, the hills and towns of his native Basque country, the cave at Manresa where he first lived the Spiritual Exercises, the lecture halls at Paris, the narrow room at Rome from which he directed the activities of his infant Society throughout the world and in which he died.

This biography, with its splendid fusion of text and pictures, does, far better than most, all that a good biography of Ignatius can do—it makes clear the paradoxes in his life without attempting to resolve them. This tiny nobleman with large ambitions, "reckless in games, in adventures with women, in brawls and deeds of arms," began the path to sanctity because, during his long convalescence from a cannon wound, his pious sister-in-law could find in the ancestral castle only a Life of Christ instead of the tales of Amadis of Gaul which had hitherto provided his skimpy intellectual fare. With no training in theology and little more in anything else, he "composed" the first drafts of the Spiritual Exercises, as a result of which he has become the "novice-master of the world" and set his stamp upon the spirituality of the Church in modern times. Contemporary psychologists who do not share Ignatius' religious faith return to the Exercises for its amazing insights into human nature, and the Protestant scholar Heinrich Boehmer has called it "a book of human destiny."

Although he had not thought of education as a work proper to his Society upon its foundation and had himself learned Latin in his thirties sitting on hard benches with nine-year-old boys, he yet answered a request to found a school, was responsible for the establishment of thirty more before his death, and marked out the bases of the *Ratio Studiorum* which made the Jesuits "the schoolmasters of Europe" for more than two hundred years.

And the last, among other paradoxes, lies in the fact that this extraordinary saint died in that narrow room from which he had looked out at the world he desired to save, without his "naming a successor, leaving the Constitution unconfirmed, without any of those significant gestures with which other servants of God have taken their earthly leave—a death like that of any ordinary man."

It is significant that both the text and pictures of this biography begin with a description of Ignatius' native Basque country, its oak and iron symbolic of his disciplined will. Text and pictures end on the same note—a close-up of Vergara's famous statue of Ignatius, in which the saint is pointing to the words which proclaim the objective he sought with that disciplined will: "the greater glory of God." If the definitive biography of Saint Ignatius is ever written, it will begin and end in the same way as does this beautiful study.

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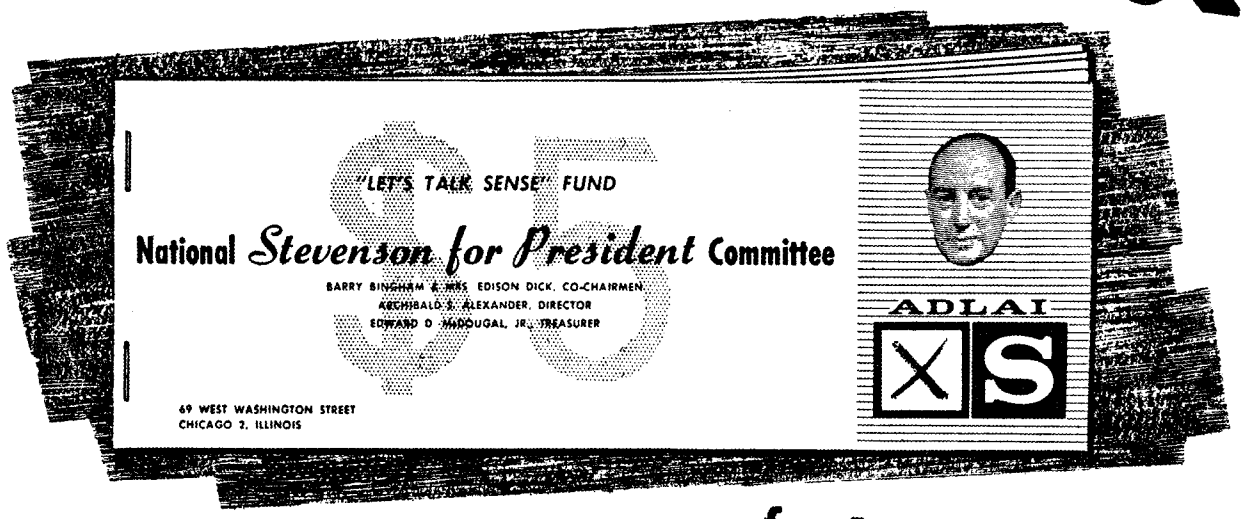

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Precarious Balance of Opposed Demands

BITTER HONEYMOON AND OTHER STORIES. By Alberto Moravia. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. $3.50.

By JAMES GREENE

THE NAME of Alberto Moravia is not a new one to American readers. His novels have been published in this country as a matter of routine, and he is to us a writer whose biting, analytical realism matches a modern mood. That mood has prevailed nowhere more strongly than in Moravia's native Italy where the ruptures and griefs of our age have struck with stunning impact. Yet Moravia never joined the post-war preachers. In novels like *The Woman of Rome,* he catches not the tone of violence, but its debilitating effect upon persons. His style, however, always emerges from the alleyways and bordellos of its passage untouched and uncompromised.

Now *Bitter Honeymoon* makes Moravia's short stories available to American readers for the first time. The several very fine stories in this collection are bound to increase Moravia's reputation in the country. Each of the stories in the book is concerned with man's relationship with woman, but beyond this the stories are as different one from another as a versatile talent can make them.

Moravia ignores, for the most part, the usual furniture of the modern short story—the long dialogues, the extended explanations and descriptions. He concentrates, in a classic fashion, on his main characters and the result in this book is a marvelous gallery of personalities who are no less (and no more) ambiguous than are real persons.

The longest story in the collection, "The Imbroglio," concerns a shy, confused university student, Gianmaria, stumbling into his first romance. The situation has never been treated with a more gentle, sophisticated humor. The boy falls in with some not-very-desirable company, and his inability to distinguish sincerity from insincerity is made agonizingly believable.

"Back to the Sea" finds the author intent on probing the motivations of more mature people in love. They do not come off any better. The story opens with the woman no longer able to bear the man, and, for less than purely noble reasons, the man is unwilling to end the marriage.

The inability of the sexes to communicate in any meaningful way is something close to an obsession with Moravia. His women are nearly always petulant, but only because the men are obtuse, unable to understand the subtle shadings of a woman's right and wrong, a woman's propriety and vulgarity, beauty and squalor. His men, for nearly the same reasons, are constantly frustrated in their intentions, their resolutions and desires. Love is almost always an affliction in these stories, a disease causing irrationality and a kind of death to the will. In "Back to the Sea" Lorenzo, the hapless husband, takes his estranged wife to a place by the sea where they had an earlier happiness and where he is sure she will repent. He alternates constantly on this trip between desire and despair. "Despite his emptiness and sadness of spirit, he could feel the turgid vitality swelling in his veins. In view of his despair, this vitality seemed a useless and ironical form of wealth and he felt desolate." Seconds later Lorenzo is again attempting to talk casually with his wife. In "Bitter Honeymoon," the title story, there is the same basic alienation and unbreakable solitude in two people just married.

As Philip Rahv points out in a short introduction, there is a basic inability in all these people to rise above the sensual facts of their lives together. They are never able to act rationally, to harness wild, goat-like wills. The result is deepening frustration, more turbid desire, a wilder will.

But from all this, Moravia does not deduce violence, jungle law or an uncivilized society. That people like Lorenzo and Gianmaria are delicately and eternally poised between the demands of self and the demands of others is a fact of their existences. It is a fact which casts a velvety cloud of sadness over these stories. In some cases the balance is destroyed. But more often resignment without acceptance sets in—a purgatory where love is inconsolably locked up in the human heart.

Moravia is often attacked as a "naturalist." But the term legitimately covers only Moravia's frame of reference, and the truths he seeks out are no less valid for that. He is merely demonstrating the truth of what another Italian wrote over six hundred years ago in the closing cantos of the *Purgatorio:* "God's high decree would be broken, if Lethe were passed, and such viands were tasted, without some sort of penitence that may shed tears."

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Patterns of Success and Failure

FOR ALL WE KNOW. By G. B. Stern. Macmillan. $3.50.

By FRANK GETLEIN

G. B. STERN'S is a reassuring talent to come across at any time. The distinction that immediately strikes the critical ear is her absolute command of the complex technical skills that should, but often do not, go without saying in a novelist of distinction. Her prose is smooth and exact; she moves expertly and easily back and forth through fictional time, creating and maintaining a present existence for a past that evolves through decades; she brings characters, situations, times and places to life with accuracy and a sometimes breathtaking economy.

When to this formidable list of achievements is added the undeniable fact that Miss Stern creates likable and even lovable people to occupy the center of her stage, you have probably explained in large part the critical limbo of the street where she lives. You have, however, noted only the minor virtues to be observed in her work. From the point of view of the current state of Anglo-American fiction, her supreme achievement is the demonstration that a novelist can both write superbly well and write primarily of pleasant people and at the same time offer a significant and penetrating insight into the authentic human condition. In *For All We Know,* Miss Stern does all these things and in the doing constructs an aesthetically satisfying pattern of repetition and variation in the human relationships within the generations of a vital English family.

The family is the two branches of the Aylesfords. Both branches are theatrical, diplomatic, civil service; the Lessamy branch is that of brilliant success, public acclaim and, on the whole, a rather self-centered pre-occupation with its own excellance; the Aylesfords are the failures, not spectacularly so in drink, destitution or exile but steadily and persistently not quite up to the standards of achievement set by their cousins in all fields. They, too, tend to be pre-occupied with the Lessamy brilliance. In the fourth generation of the failures is born the heroine of this novel, Gillian Aylesford, who puts the family pre-occupation on a scientific basis: when we meet her, at the age of fourteen, she is already embarked on her "Biography of a Famous Family." To the task she brings a sensitivity born of hereditary failure and a developing humor and irony born of its acceptance. Her unstated goal is to resolve the failure pattern by a tremendous success that shall use the success pattern as mere material.

The fate of that goal—its pursuit, abandonment, resurrection, achievement and Gillian's final transcending of it—is one of the main structural lines of the novel. The other is Gillian herself, her relations with various members of the family and in particular with her two cousins from the success branch, the brilliant and superficial Timothy and Rendal, a kind of biological sport, distinguished by sensitivity, failure, and love.

As noted, we meet Gillian at fourteen; she is forty-nine at the novel's end and we have a remarkable sense of having lived all those years with her and the steadily diminishing "great family" she grows up in and out of. Gillian is Gillian from beginning to end, yet the woman we reluctantly take leave of is vastly transformed from the girl we met. Throughout she is that rarest of fictional creations, a person you genuinely regret not knowing in real life and, nevertheless, a person of wit, intelligence and compassion.

The scope of Miss Stern's insight and the area of human significance in this novel are but vaguely indi-

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Approach to Politics, III

Is there not, as distinct from both political rationalism and political positivism, the Augustinian view, long prevalent in Western thought, according to which the State is not so much a necessity of man's "essential" nature in the order of creation, as it is an institution that emerges to preserve society and community from the disruptive consequences of the sinful egocentricity which characterizes man's "fallen" nature in the historical order?

In this conception, which is very far from being negative, the State is not identified with society or community, as it tends to be in the Aristotelian view, nor is it simply a human contrivance subject to the most arbitrary manipulation, as it is in the liberal-positivist philosophy. In this conception, both the objectivity and the historicity of the State are preserved in a way that does justice to the complex reality of the human situation. . . .

In the last analysis, the moral foundation of democracy consists of two convictions: (1) the conviction that beyond all earthly majesties, even the majesty of society and the State, there is a higher majesty and a higher law; and (2) the conviction that no man, or group of men, no matter how good or wise they may be, possess the wisdom or virtue to be entrusted with unrestricted and irresponsible power over others. It is these two convictions that are reflected in the built-in mechanisms of self-limitation, self-criticism, and self-reform that characterize the institutional framework of democracy as we know it. It is these two convictions that provide the basic distinction between the authentic democracy of the constitutional state and the pseudo-democracy of the plebiscitary mass-state. It is these two convictions, together with a proper understanding of man's social nature and his "capacity for justice", that seem to me to constitute the moral foundation of democracy.

—Will Herberg, The Commonweal, June 3, 1955

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cated in the title and the use of the success/failure pattern. She is dealing all the time with human growth in the spirit. The subtlety and ultimate effectiveness stem from the method, which is intuition by accretion rather than by star-burst, pretty much, in other words, as in life.

High Jinks

THE GREEN HILLS AND OTHER STORIES. By Walter Macken. Macmillan. $3.50.

By WILLIAM JAMES SMITH

WALTER MACKEN is already known to an American audience as a novelist (*Rain on the Wind, The Bogman,* and other tales of his native Galway) and as a dramatist (*Home is the Hero*). Many of the stories in the present collection, moreover, first appeared in the tonier American outlets, such as the *New Yorker, Harper's,* and the *Atlantic.* Mr. Macken's stories inevitably invite comparison with those of another pet of the American big slicks, Frank O'Connor. And it may be said at once that Mr. Macken comes off second best. But since O'Connor is pushing Joyce himself, the comparison still leaves Mr. Macken in very good company, albeit at the lower end of the table. Mr. Macken tells his stories in the public bar, as it were, Mr. O'Connor entertains a select group of friends in the adjoining snuggery, and Mr. Joyce amuses Mr. Earwicker in the quarters upstairs.

To come at once to the point, Mr. Macken is a sentimentalist. Sentimentality, of course, is the besetting sin of Irish literature, and Mr. Macken is a relatively mild offender. But he is a great man for a tear-dimmed smile and a beery catch in the voice. Eudora Welty has already commented upon his propensity to fall back on stock types and stock situations. Prominent in Mr. Macken's repertoire of types is the Barry Fitzgerald villain—a lovable rascal, always hoisted on his own petard, but cocky to the end. Gaeg-

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lers, Mr. Macken calls this concoction, and he appears in several of the twenty-one stories in the book. Facsimilies of Gaeglers appear in several others. If you subscribe to the Irish theory that petty criminals are a barrel of fun, Mr. Macken can offer you an evening of real high jinks.

Needless to say, the other characters in *The Green Hills* are uniformly lovable, too. It is possible to say this without cynicism. It is the simple truth. Mr. Macken believes in the elemental virtues and his characters are rich in them—brave, loyal, strong, and chaste. For all this, they do not ring essentially false—it is merely that they sometimes seem incomplete. Mr. Macken saves his idyllic world from falsity by several redeeming talents. First, by sincerity which is palpable, even though it may be occasionally misguided. The author loves the fisherfolk and the farmers of the West Country and he doesn't have to work to project their appeal. Secondly, he has the natural-born story teller's facility. He knows where he is going and he moves along briskly to the point with no dawdling for extraneous scenery or poetic dalliance. Unfortunately this virtue occasionally glides over into something that looks like hastiness, as though the story had to be finished before the ten o'clock closing. All of the stories are short—ten pages each, almost uniformly—and sometimes this is not enough to get in and move around in comfortably.

Mr. Macken's third considerable virtue is his cleanness of style. Here he matches O'Connor in achieving a verbal felicity without any sense of affectation or straining. The Irish are notoriously liable to being carried away by the sound of their own voices to the point of forgetting what it is that they are saying. Macken (as O'Connor) resists this tendency admirably. There are no passages designed to catch the eye or the ear and deflect it from the story. And yet the atmosphere and the characterizations are tellingly conveyed, even without excessive resort to cute bits of dialect.

All in all, Mr. Macken's virtues balance out his defects, and reading nice stories about nice people is not, after all, a crime. It's even fun, especially when they are done as well as they are done in *The Green Hills.*

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